

# Minutes of...Meeting to Discuss Policy Council

## Details

Date: October 31, 2007

Time: noon

Place: County Government Center, 385 N. Arrowhead Ave., 5<sup>th</sup> Floor Magda Lawson Room, San Bernardino

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## Attendees

- Charles Adams, Community Action Partnership
  - DeAnna Avey-Motikeit, Department of Children's Services
  - Karen Bell, District Attorney – Juvenile Division
  - Amy Cousineau, Children's Network
  - Meaghan Ellis, Public Health
  - Ron Griffin, Preschool Services Department
  - Linda Hagan, Human Services Administration
  - Honorable James McGuire, Juvenile Court
  - Honorable Marsha Slough, Juvenile Court
  - Mike Markel, County Counsel
  - Allan Rawland, Department of Behavioral Health
  - Karen Scott, First 5 San Bernardino
  - Margaret Smith, Public Health
  - Greg Zerovnik, San Bernardino County Library
  - David Zook, First District Board of Supervisors
  - Holly Benton, Probation Department
  - Faye Herrmann, Department of Behavioral Health
  - Arby Fields, FCYS, Inc.
  - Regina Coleman, County Counsel
  - Mae Harris-Oglesby, Department of Children's Services
  - Tammy Williams, Children's Network
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## Meeting purpose

Judge Slough welcomed everyone and self-introductions were made. Judge Slough mentioned she is honored to chair this meeting and follow in Judge McGuire's footsteps. Judge Slough mentioned we have a very full agenda today. Judge Slough stated thanks to Children's Fund and Children's Network Departments for their work in assisting fire victims at the FELAC. A motion was made to approve the agenda as submitted. A motion was made to approve the minutes that were submitted for the September meeting.

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## Topics discussed

The table below identifies the topics discussed in the meeting and the person who led each discussion.

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Topic	Discussion Leader
Welcome and Introductions	Judge Slough
Approval of Agenda	Judge Slough
Approval of September 2007 Minutes	Judge Slough
Children's Fund Report	Cousineau for Stafford
Operation Phoenix Update	Paxton
Special Presentations: Recognition of Judge McGuire and Kent Paxton	Judge Slough
Group Home Policy	All
IPC (Interagency Placement Committee)	All
Other	All
Public Comment	All

## Actions

Topic	Who is Responsible	Deadline
Amy mentioned there are eight seats available for the Children's Fund Bonne's Meres Event on November 8 <sup>th</sup> .	Please call Tammy Williams at (909) 387-5365 if interested.	

## Key points: Children's Fund Report

The following highlights were given:

Amy Cousineau reported on behalf of Rebecca Stafford.

- Amy reported that Children's Fund staff has been busy with their daily referrals and working at the FELAC on behalf of the fire victims.
- Children's Fund Board was able to donate \$25,000 on behalf of the fire victims in Target and Stater Brother's gift cards. That amount really went fast.
- Amy then called the Interim Executive Director of First 5 San Bernardino, Karen Scott. *Karen was able to get authorized \$15,000 so that it could be used as funds for fire victims.*
- Amy mentioned that the First 5 San Bernardino office staff was very involved in the Halloween party at the FELAC for children.
- Another fundraiser Children's Fund will have is the Bonnes Meres event at the National Orange Show on November 8<sup>th</sup>.
- Took the agenda out of order, to wait for Kent Paxton.

**Key points:  
Group Home  
Policy**

The following highlights were given:

Judge Slough stated that Faye Herrmann and then Mr. Fields would be offered an opportunity to speak regarding this agenda item.

- Faye gave the following background information: Mr. Fields completed an IPC (Interagency Placement Council packet) and requested on June 12, 2007 to expand his group home business in the First District. On September 11, 2007 the IPC met and stated they did not see a need for another group home in the First District at an RCL 10 level for 13 – 17 males. The Probation Department did not have a need for their 602's as well.
- Faye read the following points that substantiated there is not a need for an RCL 10 group home for males:
  - 1. San Bernardino County does NOT need additional generic group home beds in the County.
  - 2. Qualified, experienced group home providers who can deliver outcome based treatment programs to targeted populations of special needs children defined as follows: **Pregnant and parenting teens; Children with mental health and substance abuse issues; gay & lesbian youth; fire setters; sex offenders; adolescent females; gang related behavioral issues; RCL 14 placements; and Children with dual diagnosis.**
  - 3. Additional beds for the seriously emotionally disturbed children, both RCL 14 and community treatment facility beds are a critical need.
  - 4. Group homes should function as a part of a countywide system of care, with residential treatment serving specific populations within a continuum of care.
  - 5. As part of that continuum, skilled providers are needed to provide short term assessment and crisis stabilization services to enable foster children to successfully reconnect with their homes, family members, schools and communities.
  - 6. Residential care should be time limited and focus on intensive treatment milieus that are integrated with programs such as Wraparound, Family to Family to enable foster children to succeed in the least restrictive environment.
  - 7. Group home providers must design effective strategies to prevent AWOL/runaway episodes and engage youth in their treatment programs.
  - 8. Group home providers need to redesign their treatment programs to be part of an integrated mental health system of care for children.
- It was stated that there is a critical need in this county for group home beds that are: RCL 14 that can handle pregnant and parenting teens, gay and lesbian youth, fire setters, and dual diagnosis.
- Faye reported the following timeline; Mr. Fields asked for a Letter of Support for an RCL 10, 6-bed facility in the First District on January 28, 2007. Mr. Fields was asked to submit a Letter of Impact. According to the Crime Analysis from the Sheriff's Department the other two group homes Mr. Fields operates had the following number of calls; in Rancho Cucamonga for July '05 to '07 there were 79 calls and the other group ...

home had 30 calls from July '06 to July '07. This was determined to be a significant impact to law enforcement according to S. Chaney from the Department of Children's Services. After further review from the Probation Department and DCS (Department of Children's Services) stated the need was for only RCL 14 and higher. It was also mentioned that there were very few San Bernardino children in both of the group homes, and that most of them were from Los Angeles and other counties.

- Mr. Fields was offered a brief opportunity to respond to the presentation just given.
- Mr. Fields stated he did not start with the ICP; he first contacted Community Care Licensing in December '04 about the need for group home beds in the First and Fourth District. According to the application process through CCL (Community Care Licensing) he decided to purchase a seven-bedroom home in the high desert, so that each child could have his/her own bedroom and bed.
- In December '06 Mr. Fields submitted his paperwork to S. Chaney. She mentioned that there was not a need for an RCL 10 facility, but that would be more of a need for an RCL 12 facility. Mr. Fields mentioned that his payroll is based on an RCL 10 facility in the high desert. He also stated that S. Chaney reviewed his whole packet and only suggested that there should be two small changes on sections 6 and 7.
- Mr. Fields mentioned he was told from S. Chaney after making the requested corrections probably a Letter of Support could be issued. He stated he next had to fax the document to Faye showing he had completed 9 steps. Faye stated that she had made contact with the Sheriff's Department in Hesperia and the City Manager for their input. He mentioned another letter that stated they were averaging 2 calls and those were not for rape and burglary. Mr. Fields stated you have to call if there is an AWOL.
- Mr. Fields mentioned he had been working on this approval process for three years, when he could have stopped a long time ago. Mr. Fields stated he was ready to take RCL 12 children, and could change his payroll to reflect that.
- Mr. Fields stated he has been out \$3,700 per month for the last three years he has been trying to do business in this county in the high desert.
- Mr. Fields stated he would re-apply as Level 12 and thanked the group for their time and consideration.
- Allan Rawland asked Mr. Fields if he had any referrals from San Bernardino County agencies? He stated the beds could be used as transition beds for youth returning back into the community.
- Allan stated there is Nell Soto doing work in this county due to the legislation of AB 1453. The California Alliance of Group Home Operators has been involved as well, because business would change in-group homes so that children and their families could be offered more step down services, etc.
- Allan asked Mr. Fields why he didn't go to Los Angeles County to develop a group home? Response: Mr. Fields stated he has been living in..

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Alta Loma with his wife and children for 12 years. He stated he must look at need versus resources and that is why he must accept children from other counties. Mr. Fields stated he works with the California Alliance and it is common practice to take children from other counties.

Mr. Fields was thanked for the services he provides to the children in our county.

- Mae Harris-Oglesby asked if Mr. Fields was informed about the Moratorium on Group Homes in this county? She mentioned that she had just learned about it a couple of months ago herself. Mae thought the issue might be what and when Mr. Fields learned of the Moratorium.
- Amy explained that the Moratorium was only lifted in this county in the First District for existing group home providers that are looking to expand. So Mr. Fields request shouldn't have gone through the IPC process to get a Letter of Support, because he does not currently operate a group home in the First District. Amy stated she sent a letter to Mr. Fields to explain the process.
- Faye stated that on June 12<sup>th</sup> DCS and Probation reported that their departments did not need an RCL 10 program. According to Mr. Fields the letter from Mrs. Mason did not state there was not a need and to test the facility out by bringing children to the home.
- Mike Markel suggested that Mr. Fields re-apply as an RCL 12.
- A motion was made and seconded to not support the recommendation of Mr. Fields RCL 10 group home in Hesperia based on the Group Home Needs Assessment and the eight points reviewed earlier by Faye. Margaret Smith abstained from the vote.
- Mike Markel stated that Mr. Fields and his attorney would be receiving a letter.

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**Key points:  
IPC  
(Interagency  
Placement  
Committee)**

The following highlights were given:

- Amy explained that the IPC has been in operation back to the '80s. DBH (Department of Behavioral Health) has historically chaired this group. Some attendees are; Probation, DCS (Department of Children's Services), IRC (Inland Regional Center), and County Schools.
- A suggestion was made to start to have the chairmanship of this group to rotate on regular basis.
- The Policy Council members were asked for a motion to form a subcommittee to address reviewing the present operations, policy & procedure, and MOU (Memorandum of Understanding) as well as the framework. Allan Rawland asked if some action or product could be produced in the next 90 days? Included in the motion was to have this same agenda item back on the agenda for Policy Council in 90 days.
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**Key points:**  
**Operation**  
**Phoenix Update**

The following highlights were given:

Kent stated he was sorry for being late as he just finished a conference call with the League of Cities regarding Operation Phoenix.

- Kent mentioned through the Operation Phoenix they just had the Make a Difference Day on Saturday in the Westside.
  - Kent mentioned there was an article in the Sun today about an 11-year-old son of Michelle Ramirez was killed and maybe he would still have been alive with more intervention from the city.
  - Kent stated that on November 19<sup>th</sup> there would be a presentation at City Council to roll out three more areas in the city for Operation Phoenix. It will be another 20-block area.
  - Kent mentioned some of the funding sources for Operation Phoenix are from: Law Enforcement, CDBG (Community Development Block Grant), San Bernardino City Parks and Recreation Department, one million dollars weed and seed grant, and a California Rif Grant.
  - Kent mentioned that the data shows there has been a reduction of 38% crime in the Operation Phoenix area.
  - He said that Supervisor Hansberger has been very supportive of the Operation Phoenix project.
  - Kent stated that there is a very high number of gangs in San Bernardino city 3,500, and that Gangs and Drugs Task Force have been working on gangs and drugs issues around the county.
  - Kent mentioned another area of concern in the city has been the Parolees re-entry into the city, so they have been looking at the intergenerational issues of parolees, etc.
  - Kent stated a big thanks needs to go out to Public Health, DCS, Sheriff's, Police Department, and DBH for staffing the high-risk Operation Phoenix areas in San Bernardino City. He said that group of individuals from the departments listed above have been very proactive with the Street Team group.
  - Kent stated he is going to San Francisco on November 14<sup>th</sup> to speak to the League of Cities on the Operation Phoenix project. Kent mentioned he also has some speaking engagements in San Francisco, San Diego, San Jose, and Santa Rosa.
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**Key points:  
Special  
Presentations**

The following highlights were given:

- Judge McGuire presented a recognition gift to Kent Paxton for his work and dedication to children at risk in San Bernardino County. Judge McGuire stated Kent will be a great loss to the county due to his retirement and thanked him for assisting him in his job.
  - Kent presented a recognition gift to Judge McGuire and told him what a pleasure it has been working with him as his role of Presiding Judge for Juvenile Court. Kent thanked Judge McGuire for his work with at-risk children and for being the convener of the Policy Council.
  - Judge McGuire stated he would be assisting Judge Slough the remainder of 2007 until he takes his new post as Presiding Judge at the Court House on Arrowhead Avenue. He stated Judge Slough would be an excellent replacement for him.
  - Allan stated he appreciates Kent for all his collaborative work over the last 2-½ years that he has been able to work with Kent. Especially for the homeless people in our community.
  - Judge McGuire stated he was appreciative of everyone that has helped set-up the Mental Health Courts for juveniles so they are ensured quality care.
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**Key points:  
Other**

The following highlights were given:

- Linda thanked Children's Fund, Children's Network, Community Action Partnership, DCS, First 5, Public Health and a variety of other County Departments came together and have worked long and hard serving the residents through the FELAC. She stated how helpful the gift cards and gas scripts were for the residents from the fires. Linda mentioned there would be continuing services offered to the residents at a FELAC in the mountains as the Orange Show location will be closing for county services as of November 2<sup>nd</sup> at noon.
- Amy mentioned that CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates) would be having an event (Munchin at the Mansion) on Wednesday, November 14<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 p.m. at the Edwards Mansion in Redlands. This is a very worthwhile event as the proceeds go to benefit abused and neglected children of San Bernardino.
- Kent told the group goodbye as he was leaving for the CASA Strategic Planning Retreat.
- Amy mentioned that the TAY (Transitional Assistance Youth) Resource card is ready for distribution. If your department needs any, please contact Tammy Williams at (909) 387-5365.
- Allan stated that DBH, MHSA (Mental Health Services Act) funding could pay for the reproduction costs of the TAY Resource card. Payment could be handled through a transfer of funds from DBH to Children's Network.
- Allan mentioned the TAY Open House was postponed due to the fires, so another invitation will be going soon with a new date and time.
- Allan said he was very pleased with his department's clinical staff with the mental health services they were able to provide the residents at the FELAC. For further mental health services needed, Allan stated the residents would be referred to contract agencies.
- Karen Bell stated that the District Attorney has developed some materials they are sharing with the residents whom lost their homes so that they will be aware of people in the community that might try to take advantage of them.
- Linda mentioned she wants to hear about some human stories at the FELAC and will be contacting her management staff.

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**Key points:  
Public  
Comment**

Public comment was given on the Group Home Policy issues.

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**Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be December 5, 2007, at noon, Magda Lawson Room, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor, County Government Center, 385 N. Arrowhead Ave., San Bernardino.